

WATCHING THE ORATOR AT WORK

GRAMMAR ASSUMED:

Participles

WHEELOCK: CHAPTER 23

In this passage from the *Brutus*, a survey of Roman oratory, Cicero describes the effect that an accomplished speaker has on his audience.

Nunc surgit magnus orator, causam dicturus: omnis locus in subselliis occupatur; plenum est tribunal; iudices omnia illius verba audire cupientes silentium significant. Oculi omnium ad illum vertuntur. Tum multae admirationes, multae laudes. Orator animos audientium tangit. Ubi cupit eos metu aut misericordia moveri, metu aut misericordia oppressi terrentur aut flent.

De oratore, etiam si tu non adsidens et attentè audiens, sed uno aspectu et praeteriens eum aspexeris, saepe iudicare poteris. Videbis iudicem oscitantem, loquentem cum altero, non numquam etiam errantem, mittentem ad horas, verba ab oratore dicta neglegentem. Haec causa caret vero oratore, qui potest animos iudicum movere oratione. Si autem erectos iudices videris, qui de re doceri videbuntur aut suspensi tenebuntur, ut cantu aliquo aves, cognoscens signa veri oratoris et laborem oratorium bene gerentis.

—adapted from Cicero, *Brutus* 200, 290

VOCABULARY:

surgō, -ere, surrexi, surrectus: to rise

causam dicere: to plead a case

subsellium, -ii, n.: bench, seat (in the lawcourt)

occupō (1): to seize, occupy

tribunal, -alis, n.: raised platform for magistrates' chairs (in the lawcourt)

silentium, -ii, n.: silence; silentium significare = to signal for silence, call for silence

multae admirationes, multae laudes: supply sunt twice

admirationi, -onis, f.: expression of admiration, applause

misericordia, -ae, f.: pity, mercy

fleo, -ere, flevi, fletus: to weep

adsideo, -ere, assedi, assessus: to sit near

attentè (adverb): attentively (from attentus, -a, -um)

aspectus, -us, m.: look, glance

praetereo, -ire, -ii, -itus: to pass by, go by

aspicio, -ere, -spexi, -spectus: to catch sight of, see

oscitō (1): to yawn

loquor, loqui, locutus sum: to speak (loquentem = present active participle)

mittere ad horas: to send (someone) to find out the time

erigo, -ere, -rexi, -rectus: to raise up, excite, arouse

suspendō, -ere, -pendi, -pensus: to hang up, suspend (suspensi = hung, i.e. hanging on his words)

ut (conjunction): as, just as

cantus, -us, m.: song, birdcall

avis, avis, f.: bird

cognoscō, -ere, -novi, -nitus: to recognize

oratorius, -a, -um: oratorical

gerentis: genitive participle modifying oratoris; its object is laborem oratorium